

PREPARING FOR & COMPETING IN THE JOB MARKET

“There is no end in sight for the good you can do. Do you know it? You are just simple kids. You are not geniuses. I know that. But the work of the world isn't done by geniuses. It is done by ordinary people who have learned to work in an extraordinary way.”

-Pres. Hinckley to BYU-Idaho Students

Academic Discovery Center

MC 129 ▪ 208.496.9825 ▪ academicdiscoverycenter@byui.edu

STAND OUT IN THE CROWD

In the current job market you need to be competitive. You are competing with many groups of people for jobs including:

- Other BYU-Idaho graduates
- Graduates from other schools in Idaho
- Graduates from other schools in the region
- People with experience who have been laid off or looking for a career change, and willing to take entry-level positions



Here are some things to consider about how you measure up to your competition:

What makes you unique?

What is the most important thing a potential employer should know about you?

***You have to know yourself to sell yourself.
Make sure you are able to communicate to potential employers all the reasons you stand out!***

STAY BUSY

Employers are looking for people who are busy. A busy schedule demonstrates time management skills, the ability to handle multiple projects, and a strong work ethic.

Are you busy? Fill out the chart below with how many **hours per week** you spend on each of the activities listed, then total those hours at the bottom. Do not include time spent eating, going to the gym, traveling to and from work/school, watching TV, hanging out with friends, going to the movies, etc.



Classes

(count only hours in class)

Study time

(determine an average of out-of-class study time)

Extracurricular

(organized sports, student involvement, etc.)

Work

(hours per week spent working and/or volunteering)

TOTAL

Ideally, your total should be 50-60 hours a week. It is common to work more than 40 hours a week and your future employer needs to know that you will be dedicated and willing to work hard. The people you are competing with for jobs are probably busy and involved, so you need to be as well. Remember – you need to be busy and involved in activities that will build relevant skills and a good work ethic. If your total is less than 50 hours, find new activities to keep you busy.

You must be busy in order to compete in the job market, and you need to be prepared to work hard in your career.

GET THE MOST OUT OF BYU-IDAHO

Embrace the Learning Model

Prepare, Teach One Another, Ponder/Prove

Be a participant, not an observer

You are responsible for your own education – take responsibility and learn all you can. Ask and answer questions, and complete assignments with motivation to learn, not just to get a grade.

Lead group projects

Group work can be difficult and frustrating, but it can also be an opportunity to build leadership skills and gain experience in the subject matter.

Tailor your degree

Take classes that are interesting to you and will help you meet career goals. Think in terms of what potential employers may be looking for and what skills you want to build.

Have a Grad Plan

Create a plan for graduation and stick to it. This will ensure there are no surprises when you're ready to graduate, and also make sure you are able to take the classes you want.

The Grad Planner (web.byui.edu/gradplan) is a great tool to use. Contact the Academic Discovery Center of your major for help.



UTILIZE ACADEMIC RESOURCES

There are many resources on campus available to students to help them succeed academically. Take advantage of the various centers and offices on campus and get more out of your education. Below are listed some of the resources available.

Visit Your Professors

Even if you are doing well in your classes, take time to visit your professors outside of class. They can help you gain a better perspective on the subject matter and answer questions. Professors are also a great place to go for career information and advice – they are the industry experts and can give you valuable insight.

Academic Discovery Centers

MAIN OFFICE – MANWARING 129A

AGRICULTURE & LIFE SCIENCES – BENSON 240

BUSINESS & COMMUNICATION – SMITH 227

EDUCATION & HUMAN DEVELOPMENT – HINCKLEY 309

LANGUAGE & LETTERS – SMITH 269

PERFORMING & VISUAL ARTS – MANWARING 376

PHYSICAL SCIENCES & ENGINEERING – AUSTIN 106

- Academic Advising
- Course and Graduation Planning
- Internship and Career Resources

Academic Support Centers

MCKAY LIBRARY, 2ND FLOOR

208.496.4270

- Tutoring
- Reading Center
- Writing Center
- Math Study Center
- Study Skills Center
- English Transitional Center
- Presentation Practice Center



DEVELOP THE RIGHT SKILLS

Learn how to talk about your experiences to employers. On your resume, in interviews and when networking, make sure you can identify the skills and qualities you have that they are looking for and that you have experiences to back them up. **Employers want to know about your accomplishments and skills, not just your previous job duties.**

Employers are looking for “soft” skills, not just technical skills. Many technical skills can be trained, but it is more difficult to train a new employee to communicate effectively, be flexible and reliable, manage their time wisely, be a team player, or solve problems creatively. Candidates who possess these skills are valuable to the company.

In addition, you have to be able to **show employers that you have these qualities**. It is not enough just to list them on your resume.

SKILLS THAT ARE IMPORTANT TO EMPLOYERS

- Enthusiasm and initiative
- Flexibility and adaptability
- Confidence
- Reliability
- Hardworking and strong work ethic
- Communication skills
- Time management skills
- Teamwork and leadership
- Precise and detail oriented
- Commitment
- Analytical and problem solving skills
- Interpersonal skills
- A positive attitude

What “soft” skills do you have and how have you demonstrated them in past experiences?

Now consider your chosen career field. What technical skills do you have in your career field and how have you demonstrated them?

EXPERIENCE

GAIN VALUABLE EXPERIENCE

It is important to gain experience while you're in college. There are many ways to can gain experience to build your resume and sell yourself to employers.



Internships

Working as an intern is a great way to gain experience and get to know the field you'll be working in. Although most majors require an internship, don't view your internship as just another hoop to jump through. Consider it an opportunity to build your résumé and skills, and to position you to be competitive in the job market.

Some internships are formal programs offered by companies, others are developed by the student and employer to meet both of their needs. Find one that will allow you to gain the experience you're looking for and will also provide you with a mentor in the field. Become familiar with the requirements for internships in your major and make sure your internship is approved.

What internship experience do you have and what did you gain? Or, what are looking for in an internship? (e.g., skills to learn or improve, industries, etc.)

Jobs

All work experience is valuable. Part-time student jobs are a great way to build work-related skills and demonstrate your work ethic. Even what seems to be a simple job, can give you valuable experience if you recognize and take advantage of the opportunity.

What jobs have you had, and what skills have you gained and demonstrated?

EXPERIENCE

What tasks or projects could you do to enhance your experience?

Student Organizations

Involvement and leadership in college is something employers are looking for. Get involved with clubs or groups that you are interested and/or that are related to your career interests. Make sure to take on leadership roles and volunteer for tasks that will build relevant skills.



What organizations are you involved in and how does that experience relate to your career?

Community Service

Non-profit organizations are always interested in volunteers and can provide valuable experience for students. As with other opportunities, look for experiences that will help you build your résumé and relate to your future career.



What community organizations are you interested in and what kind of work could you offer them?

MAKE A GOOD IMPRESSION

Your professional image is more than just the way you dress for an interview. You must be professional at all times and in all places (especially when interacting with a potential employer, or networking). This also applies to communication on the phone and through email.



On the phone

Be aware of your tone on the phone and don't talk to professionals the same way you talk to your friends.

- Make sure your voicemail recording is professional and appropriate.
- Be polite and professional.
- If you're not in a good situation to answer the phone (in the car, at a friend's house, at the gym, etc.) let it go to voicemail and call them back as soon as possible.
- Be prepared to talk on the phone if a phone interview has been scheduled.



In your emails

Correspondence with a professional is not the same as chatting online or emailing your friends.

- Use proper spelling, grammar, and punctuation (e.g., not all caps or all lowercase).
- Use formal greetings and salutations.
- Do not use slang or abbreviations.
- Always proofread emails before clicking send.
- Answer emails promptly (within 24 hours).
- Take emails very seriously because you can't take them back.



In person

Learn and practice proper etiquette – sometimes it's the little things that set you apart. Remember to always be on your best behavior.

- Be nice to everyone you meet.
- Always be on time – for interviews, meetings, events, phone calls, etc.
- Avoid use of cell phones and other electronics when meeting with professionals. Turn them off or don't bring them.
- Keep conversations positive and professional – even with your peers when in professional settings. Don't talk negatively about others or discuss weekend plans.
- Be aware of your nonverbal communication. Half of your message is interpreted based on your nonverbal cues. Have good posture, smile, and don't fold your arms.
- Focus and pay attention – you wouldn't want to ask about something already said.
- Learn proper dining etiquette.
- Dress professionally whenever you attend a business or professional event, or when you may have the opportunity to network. It's also a good idea to avoid extremely casual dress as you don't know who you might meet or run into.

ESTABLISH A PROFESSIONAL ONLINE IMAGE

Recruiters are using social media and online searches to learn about job candidates. What a potential employer sees about you online paints a picture and is their first impression of you. Make sure it's a good one.

Facebook, Twitter, MySpace, blogs, etc.

Make it private or clean it up. Also be aware of what other people post on your profile and what you post on theirs.

Google yourself

If what comes up is not appropriate, change or remove what you can, and add more positive things about yourself.



Create a LinkedIn profile

LinkedIn profiles rise to the top of search results, so you have more control over what potential employers see about you online. It is a professional online space to sell yourself and network.

WHAT IS LINKEDIN AND WHY SHOULD I JOIN?

- LinkedIn is the world's largest professional network and is growing rapidly.
- Build a professional online presence and manage what potential employers learn about you on the Internet.
- Research companies and career paths.
- Explore opportunities for internships and full-time positions with organizations that don't recruit on campus.
- Learn professional networking etiquette.

LinkedIn Stats:

- Over 100 million professionals in over 200 countries and territories
- Over 150 industries
- Over 2 million company pages
- Executives from every Fortune 500 company
- LinkedIn hiring solutions used by 73 of the Fortune 100 companies
- 37,000 university groups

CREATE A PROFILE THAT REPRESENTS YOU

- List your current and past positions and education along with your tenure there.
- Add a professional profile photo.
- Add a summary paragraph. Think of it as your professional elevator pitch.
- Import your résumé.
- Ask for recommendations.

5 Golden Rules for Your Linked-In Profile

- Professional photo of you alone
- Headline with area of study and/or career ambitions
- Keyword-rich summary that includes type of positions you are seeking
- Recommendations from supervisors, coworkers, professors, advisors, etc.
- Reference your profile in email signature.

NETWORKING

MAKE CONNECTIONS

During your college years is the time to start making professional connections. The key to networking is relationships, and relationships take time and effort. Networking also takes practice and you need to understand etiquette when building professional relationships. Talk to people to learn about career paths and industries, and to get validation and advice as you make decisions.

The tools listed below are just some of the tools you should use to make connections.

Career Fair

INTERNSHIP, CAREER AND GRADUATE SCHOOL FAIR
offered each Fall and Winter semester
BYU-Idaho Center Courts
www.byui.edu/academic-discovery-center

ANNUAL CAREER FEST JOB FAIR
For more information, call (208) 542-6733 – Idaho Falls LDS Employment Resource Services

Internship Expeditions and Service Missionaries

Expeditions scheduled periodically through departments.
Application and missionary information available online.
http://www.byui.edu/CareerServices/Student_Expeditions.htm

BYU Management Society

One-on-one mentoring, internships and jobs, nationwide networking.
www.byumanagementsociety.com

Professional Associations

Search online and talk to professors and others in the industry about organizations or associations you should join.

LinkedIn

Search groups, companies, and people to build relationships and learn about the industries or companies you want to work for.



CONDUCT RESEARCH

Industries and Companies

TOOLS:

- Internet – search engines and company websites
- Company literature
- Newspapers, magazines, journals, etc.

INFORMATION:

- Products/services
- Customers/markets
- Company history
- Mission, vision, values
- Competitors
- Career paths
- Job outlook
- Industry predictions



Informational interviews

Set up meetings with people who work in the industry or companies you're interested in. Ask for their advice and information about their career.

THINGS TO ASK ABOUT:

- Career path
- Education
- Best and worst aspects of job
- Important skills
- Day-to-day work
- Job outlook
- Company culture
- Opportunities and challenges



BE INVOLVED AND PREPARED

There are four areas you should focus on to make yourself employable after college: academics, experience, professionalism, and networking. Engaging in activities in these areas will prepare you to make the transition from college to career. They will provide you with opportunities to develop the skills and qualities that employers are looking for.

Use this checklist throughout your college experience to make yourself an ideal candidate for jobs when you graduate.

Academics:

- Attend all classes and participate actively in discussions
- Assume leadership roles in group projects
- Take courses that relate to your career goals
- Complete and follow your grad plan (web.byui.edu/gradplan)
- Visit your professors during office hours



Experience:

- Develop work-related skills
- Complete at least one internship
- Gain work experience
- Join and hold leadership positions in clubs and organizations
- Participate in relevant community service or volunteer activities



Professionalism:

- Attend career and professional development events
- Participate in at least one practice interview
- Have your resume critiqued by a professional
- Learn about proper business etiquette and dress
- Create a LinkedIn profile



Networking:

- Participate in career fairs
- Build strong professional connections
- Join professional associations
- Research industries and companies of interest
- Perform informational interviews with business professionals